



THE CHILD SAYS NOTHING, BUT WHAT IT HEARD BY THE FIRE

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Poetry Contest - Second Place

I know death well.
She sat with my ancestors on the slave ships
kissing their lips as they were thrown
off-board, whispering lullabies
to make the fall a little softer.
She raised my family in her bosom,
feeding them strife and sadness
for so long that spiders pooled
in their bellies, famished.
She held their left hands
as they killed with their right
and held the flag of their
independence between her blackened legs.
I wouldn't consider her a friend.
But she knows me better than a mother.
For years, it felt like we had finally evaded
her grasp. Yet here, we find her as our matriarch.
I know death well, though she has yet to touch me.
Yet, the child says nothing, but what it heard by the fire.

